REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR HELENA JURISDICTIONAL AREA

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FOR

HELENA JURISDICTIONAL AREA

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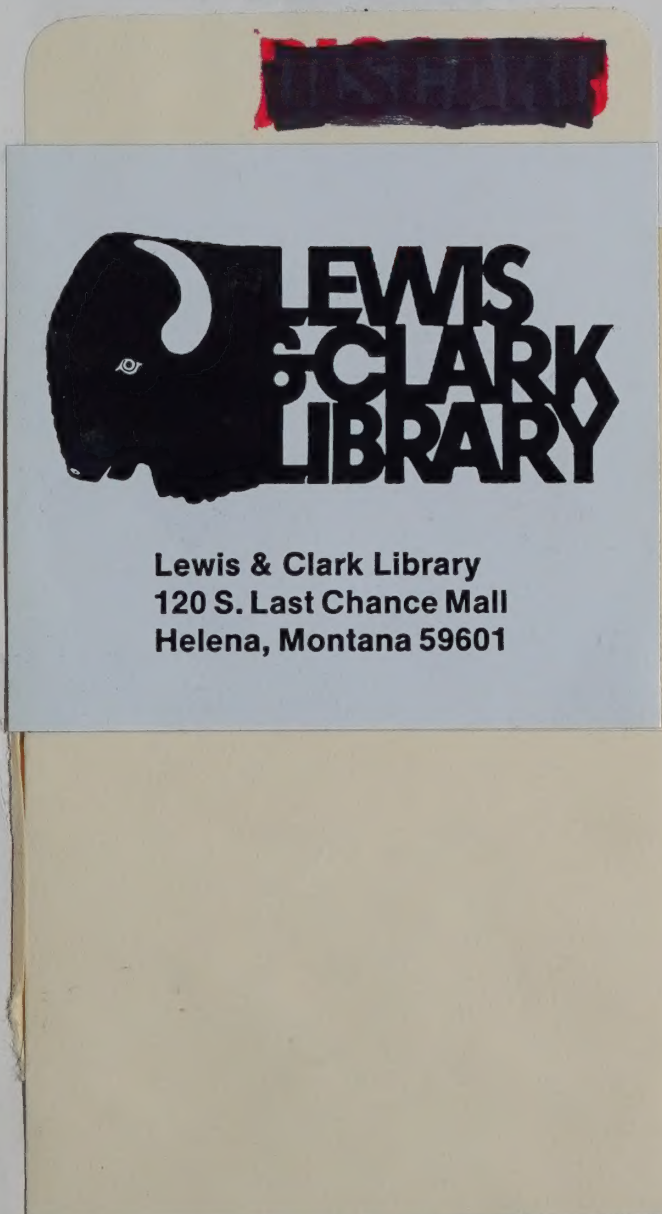

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BACKGROUND

The people of the Helena area have been endowed with some of nature's richest gifts. Plenty of open space and elbow room, clean air and water and one of the most spectacular settings in a state famous for its natural beauty are just a few of the amenities that residents of the area enjoy. It is primarily because of such "extras" that Helena has been a good place to live, work and raise a family.

Most residents have always enjoyed these benefits while taking them very much for granted. However, it has become evident in recent years that the environment is too important to be left to chance. The natural beauty has been altered by man. Suburbanization of population, increased traffic and other signs of growth have had an effect on these "extras" that everyone expected to always be here.

While the problems of urbanization in the Helena area are nowhere near the scale they are in the nation's larger centers, they are no less real. Unless some thought and direction is given to the growth process then, those living here will not only lose the natural amenities that make the area desirable but will also incur unnecessary expense, inefficiency and inconvenience in the future.

The fact that growth should be beneficial and not detrimental to a community has been recognized by Montana law since 1947. In that year, the legislature passed enabling legislation to encourage the formation of city-county planning boards to study the problems of growth and advise city councils and county boards on future development. The legislature's mandate to city-county boards was to promote orderly growth so that health, safety and welfare will be protected.

The Helena City-County Planning Board, established in March, 1965, was created for this purpose. The Planning Board has already prepared a Comprehensive Plan to guide future development within the city limits so that it will contribute to a more livable community. The Comprehensive Plan designates the most appropriate use of land, the location of needed community facilities, as well as the street and highway system that will most efficiently serve this arrangement.

The Comprehensive Plan for Helena was designed to promote orderly growth. It is obvious, however, that the problems of urban growth do not stop at city limit lines. If the community, as a whole, is to be a good place to live, development in the unincorporated area must be coordinated with the growth and development in Helena.

Because development in the unincorporated suburban area has not been coordinated with Helena's, many problems are evident. Residential density in some sections is higher than it is in the city although there is no shortage of land. Despite this density there have been no provisions made for utility service or land set aside for recreational or other public purposes. Access to much of this suburbanizing area is poor, and there is the beginning of strip commercial development on those areterials which do run any distance. In many parts of the unincorporated area there is an intermixture of land use that detracts from the efficiency and value of the individual uses.

The elected officials of the city and county and the City-County Planning Board have recognized that such problems exist and that sound development of the

unincorporated area is vital to the entire Helena area. It is for those reasons that the City-County Planning Board has prepared a plan to guide future physical development in the jurisdictional area. This is the area within four and a half miles of the Helena city limits, and within which the legislature has enabled Planning Boards to make such plans for orderly growth.

The plan for the jurisdictional area is presented in this report. Its aim is to show the most desirable and efficient arrangement of land uses, arterial streets and community facilities. The plan is based on the existing developmental pattern and has attempted to coordinate this existing pattern with future plans within the city. The plan then is based on physical rather than political considerations.

While the jurisdictional area plan does not take city limit lines into consideration, it should be emphasized that political decisions are going to have to be made before many more years, particularly by residents of the North Valley. It is in this area which is more densely developed and heavily populated that public services and utilities will be required in the near future. Whether or not these services and utilities can be provided more efficiently and economically by incorporation, by annexing to the City of Helena or by other means is a question that the residents of the area will ultimately have to decide. It should be evident that these water, sewer and other facilities can be provided much more economically if growth is in accord with a plan coordinated with development in Helena.

GROWTH PROSPECTS

The amount of land allocated for various purposes in any plan should be as close in line with probable future demands as possible. The plan for the Helena jurisdictional area then should be based on realistic estimates of growth prospects. These are related to economic and population potential of the entire Helena area.

In 1960 the City of Helena had a population of 20,227 people. The City's population represented almost three-fourths of the entire population of Lewis and Clark County. The 1968 population of the City has been estimated at 22,319. Estimates of future population foresee 28,500 persons living within the existing city limits by 1985.

More important than the population of the city itself is the number of people living within the entire planning area. This includes both the city and the jurisdictional area. The 1968 population of the Helena planning area was estimated at 25,594 persons. The planning area then accounts for more than 80 percent of the people living in Lewis and Clark County. An even greater proportion of the county's population can be expected within the planning area by 1985. In that year there are expected to be some 35,047 people residing in the Helena planning area.

In addition to the trend towards greater concentration around the urban center and a decline of population in the rural area, the population movement in Lewis and Clark County mirrors another important nationwide trend, suburbanization. The jurisdictional area surrounding Helena has been growing at a faster rate than the city. This is expected to continue in the future.

The population of the jurisdictional area in 1960 numbered 1,715 people. By 1968 it had almost doubled and included almost 3,300 people. The population of the jurisdictional area is expected to more than double again by 1985. An estimated 7,450 people will be living in the jurisdictional area by that year.

How will this population be distributed throughout the jurisdictional area in 1985? Total population has been distributed according to the individual analysis areas indicated on the map titled Growth By Analysis Area. The map and table indicate that most of the growth can be expected in the North Valley and the area immediately west of Helena. Because of steep slopes, poor drainage, large blocks of publicly owned land and other factors, the growth in the other sub-areas of the jurisdictional area is not expected to be as great.

Table 1
Helena Planning Area Population, 1960-1985

	County	Planning Area	Helena	Jurisdictional Area
1960	28,006	21,942	20,227	1,715
1965	30,739	24,160	21,510	2,650
1968	32,503	25,594	22,319	3,275
1970	33,218	26,400	22,730	3,670
1975	35,603	28,795	24,200	4,595
1980	38,089	31,782	25,797	5,985
1985	40,749	35,950	28,500	7,450

Table 2
Population Distribution in the Helena Jurisdictional Area

Area	Population Estimate 1968	1985	Increase 1968-1985
1	3	3	0
2	1481	3359	1878
3	270	312	42
4	183	809	626
5	246	330	84
6	1190	2735	1545
	3275	7450	4175

LAND USE

Information on the existing use of land and pattern of development is vital to the development of a plan for the future. To determine this a complete survey of existing land use in the jurisdictional area was made using aerial photographs and by checking in the field. Once the field work was completed the various land uses were tabulated by square mile section and by analysis area and a land use map prepared. This map, Existing Land Use, is on the facing page.

The jurisdicitonal area extends over 80 square miles of 51,525 acres. More than 60 percent of the area, some 51 square miles, is in forest or grazing use or is vacant. Another 21 square miles are in agricultural use. Approximately seven square miles, or 4,600 acres, are considered developed. This represents only eight percent of the entire jurisdictional area land. Table 4 shows the distribution of land among the various land uses both in the jurisdictional and total planning area.

Residential Use

About 40 percent of the residential acreage in the Helena planning area is located outside the city limits. Total residential land amounts to 589 acres.

Most of the residential development has taken place in two areas, west of the city near U.S. 12 and to the north in the Helena Valley. There are smaller residential concentrations at Unionville, at Seaver Park near East Helena and adjacent to the north boundary of the airport.

Almost all of the residential land is used for single family dwellings. The few multiple dwellings in the jurisdictional area are located near the west city limits. Except for some of the newer subdivisions, trailers on individual lots and in trailer courts are mixed indiscriminately with single family homes in most parts of the unincorporated area.

The density, or persons per residential acre, varies considerably in the jurisdictional area, although the overall density is relatively low in comparison to the city. The average density in Helena is 23.8 persons per acre, while in the unincorporated portion of the planning area it is 5.6 persons per acre. In some residential concentrations in the jurisdictional area, such as the Vandenberg Village-Ehler's addition, the number of persons per acre approaches the density of the newer subdivision in Helena.

The differences in density by analysis area are indicated in the following table.

Table 3
Residential Density

Analysis Area	Residential Acres	Persons Per Acres
1	.4	7.5
2	314.4	4.7
3	62.0	4.4
4	28.3	6.5
5	26.4	9.3
6	157.5	7.6
Total	589.0	5.6
Helena	922.9	23.8
Total Planning Area	1511.9	16.7

Commercial Use

There are 110 acres of commercially used land in the jurisdictional area. Almost all of this acreage is in highway-oriented businesses, such as auto, trailer and equipment sales and service, which require large areas for display and storage. This accounts for the relatively large proportion of the planning area's total commercial land lying within the jurisdictional area. There is little neighborhood serving commercial activity or land in use. The only facilities serving local shopping needs are the grocery stores at Ehler's corner and at the intersection of U.S. 12 and Williams.

Almost all the commercial acreage is in the form of strip commercial development along the major highways leading into Helena. U.S. 12, both east and west of the city, Euclid Avenue adjacent to the west city limits and Montana Avenue all are developing with scattered commercial uses. This type of development cuts down the traffic-carrying capacity of these access routes, discourages sound residential development and generally has a blighting effect on adjoining land uses and property. The plan described in the following pages requires that the commercial activities be contained to well-defined and strategically located areas.

Industrial Use

Industrial acreage makes up almost a third of the developed land in the jurisdictional area. There are 1,120 acres, four-fifths of which is located between Helena and East Helena. The industrial land is located along the Northern Pacific Railroad which cuts across the entire planning area. The largest single industrial land use is the airport. Almost all of the industrial acreage is used for manufacturing and extractive industries. The eight manufacturing establishments in the jurisdictional area are small and make up a relatively small percentage of the industrial land uses.

Table 4
Existing Land Use

	Acres of Land		Jurisdictional Area		
	Planning Area	City*	Acres	Square Miles	Percent
Residential	1,504	915	589	.92	12.9
Commercial	297	187	110	.17	2.4
Industrial	1,157	37	1,120	1.75	24.3
Public & Semi-Public	801	187	614	.96	13.3
Streets & Highways	2,303	1,042	1,261	1.97	27.3
Railroad Right of Way	2,675	2,328	347	.54	7.5
Developed Open Space	705	140	565	.88	12.3
Total Developed	7,442	2,836	4,606	7.19	100.0
Agriculture	13,797	65	13,732	21.46	
Water Area	164	0	164	.26	
Vacant, Grazing, Forest	35,864	2,841	33,023	51.60	
Total	57,267	5,742	51,525	80.51	

*City Data - 1965 Land Use Survey.

Public and Open Space Use

Public and semi-public uses take up 614 acres of land in the jurisdictional area, while developed open space amounts to 565 acres. The public and semi-public uses are loosely grouped near the north, west and east city limits. Rossiter and Kessler elementary schools serve as neighborhood centers for the two major densities of residential development north and west of Helena. The fact that residential density around these two schools is relatively high emphasizes the influence of public facilities on development and as a means of guiding future growth.

While the acreage classified as developed open space is relatively large, almost all of it is in nonrecreational or private facilities. The largest developed open space uses are the three cemeteries west of Ehler's Corner, the Green Meadow Country Club, and the Mount Helena Park Reserve, which is also included in this category. At present, there is only one developed public park or recreational facility in the entire jurisdictional area, that being the Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds. Future plans must designate appropriate locations for recreation before all desirable sites are gone.

Agricultural Use

Agricultural land amounts to over 13,700 acres and accounts for over a fourth of the jurisdictional area acreage. Almost all of this is in crops or pastures in the Helena Valley and along Ten Mile Creek. The Helena Valley Unit of the Canyon Ferry Project has provided irrigation water to most of the irrigable land in the planning area.

The fact that a substantial public investment has already been made in providing this irrigation system and that the areas served are capable of relatively intense agricultural production, indicates that this portion of the

jurisdictional area should be reserved for this type of use in the future. Unless protective measures are enacted, however, the irrigated area will be spotted with residences and other types of uses, making farming too difficult and expensive to continue.

The farmland directly north of the city has already developed this way. With the piecemeal sale of small acreage parcels along the roads, much of the property will be without adequate access, making it unsalable or expensive and difficult to service.

DETERRENTS TO DEVELOPMENT

The existing development pattern in the Helena planning area has been shaped by both manmade and natural features. Among the former are the railroad lines, highways, the airport and the utility systems. These can all be expected to influence future development as well. The freeway, for example, has made land further north beyond the jurisdictional area equally accessible. At the same time this north-south limited access facility acts as a definite barrier to contiguous development in the North Valley area.

More important than these manmade objects, however, are the natural features which determined the location of rail lines and highways in the first place. The map following shows some of these features which have been instrumental in determining the developmental pattern in the planning area.

The deterrents to development include steep slopes, flood hazardous and poorly drained soils and areas of high water table. Another is the dredge tailings area which extends north from within the city out into the jurisdictional area and which acts as a barrier to east-west movement in this part of the planning area, and has caused development to skip over a large area.

Another factor which has been influential in directing urban development in the Helena planning area has been publicly owned land. There are extensive governmental lands to the south, west and northeast of the city which have restricted growth in these directions. This has been an important determinant in the growth of the North Valley.

FUTURE LAND REQUIREMENTS

The process of determining the amount of land required for future development involves the coordination of differing types of information and data. The data obtained from the land use inventory concerns itself with the physiographic features of the land; i.e., soil, depth of water tables, size, condition and slope. These features are then coordinated to each general type of use (commercial, residential, industrial). As a result the landuse type can be matched with the land area. This information is then coordinated with the population forcast. From this type of total information the amount of land required for future development can be established. Following are the future land requirements for the jurisdictional area.

Population growth in the jurisdictional area will mean additional residential land in use by the end of the planning period. With or without any plan for future growth, the density, or persons per acre, can be expected to be greater because of higher land costs and the possible introduction of community facilities. In estimating the amount of residential land to be needed, it has been assumed that the density will range between eight and twelve persons per acre. The lower figure is an extension of the present trend. The figure of twelve persons per acre would enable utilities and services to be provided more efficiently and more economically.

The following table shows the estimated land required to accommodate residential growth to 1985. By 1975 an estimated 165 additional net residential acres will be required at the density of eight persons per acre. At the higher density some 110 acres would be needed. Gross acreage, including land needed for streets, would range between 157 and 236 acres. By 1985 the gross residential acreage would be in the range of 500 to 750 acres. This, of course, is in addition to land already in residential use.

The population increase of 4,175 persons in the jurisdictional area by 1985 will mean additional housing units as well as land. It is estimated that some 1,600 new units will be required to house this added population. At present, the housing inventory in the area is comprised almost entirely of single family homes and individual trailers on lots. In the future, however, a greater number of multiple housing units can be expected. Table 6, which presents estimates of the number of housing units by type and the net acreage required, makes this assumption. The net residential land requirement of 371 acres is in line with the estimate presented in Table 5.

The amount of commercial land presently in use in the jurisdictional area is high. However, almost all of this is used by activities that require large sites and which are not oriented towards serving the needs of local residents. By 1985, population growth will create a need for neighborhood shopping facilities. There will also be a need for highway-oriented commercial. An estimated 25 to 40 acres of additional commercial land is forecast by 1985. This plan recognizes that the City of Helena will continue to be in the foreseeable future, the major center for service and trading activities which service the population of the jursidictional area.

The projection of needs for industrial land is most difficult for Helena, since its economic base is mainly concerned with government oriented services. However, the plan does show the areas most logically suited for industrial development. The criteria for distinquishing this land as industrial was the transportation facilities, availability of land, availability of community facilities and compatibility with surrounding landuses. Using the most pertinent information, the plan estimates that between 225 to 275 additional acres of land will be used for industrial purposes by 1985.

Land for additional public facilities will require from 50 to 65 acres. At present there is no land set aside for neighborhood park or playground use. In the future the County Commissioners must demand that useable ground be dedicated for parks and recreation purposes in new subdivisions. Then a system must be initiated to develop and maintain these parks. This type of recreational area should be provided with the increased density expected. On the basis of the park and recreation standards contained in the Comprehensive Plan for Helena, some 17 to 26 acres of land would be required to meet this deficiency. Sufficient land is available for joint development of a

school-neighborhood playground on the Rossiter Elementary site. This would also be possible at Kessler Elementary if the School Board or the County would purchase the vacant ground south of the school.

Table 5
Jurisdictional Area Residential Land Requirements

	1968-1975	1975-1985	1968-1985
Population Growth	1,320	2,855	4,175
Density of 8 Persons/Acre			
Net Acres	165	357	522
Gross Acres	236	510	746
Density of 12 Persons/Acre			
Net Acres	110	238	348
Gross Acres	157	340	497

Table 6
Jurisdictional Area Population Distribution By Housing Type - 1985

Housing Type	Percent of Population	Population	Additional Housing Units	Net Acres
Single Family	74	3,090	1,144	286
Apartment	3	125	56	7
Trailer on Lot	12	501	186	47
Mobile Home Court	10	417	185	21
Other	1	42	42	10
Total	100%	4,175	1,613	371

PLANNING GOALS AND STANDARDS

A statement of goals and the setting of standards for development are important parts of the Comprehensive planning process. Citizen participation, future land requirements, physical deterrence, coupled with planning goals and standards are the basis for preparing the plan map which shows the proposed location and extent of the various landuses, thoroughfares and community facilities. The goals, the standards, and the map are expressions of official development policy.

The statement of planning goals presented below conforms generally to the development objectives expressed in the Comprehensive Plan for Helena. They conform to the thinking of the County Commission and the City-County Planning Board with regard to development in the jurisdictional area. Planning is a dynamic process, therefore, this plan and its goals must be reviewed for possible changes and updating on a regular basis, to reflect new development objectives of those who live in the jurisdictional area.

- Agriculture is a basic industry in Montana and an important factor in the local economy. Prime irrigable agricultural land in the Helena Valley that is presently not split into uneconomic farming units by scattered urban development should

be retained in agricultural use and protected from the encroachment of urban development.

- Urban residential growth in an easily serviced and efficient form should be encouraged. Residential growth should be directed toward existing concentrations of residential development where public utilities and other community facilities can be provided. While the low density character of suburban development should be preserved, a distinct break should be established between urban and agricultural uses.

- Recreation can be expected to assume an increasing role in the future. Demand for recreation facilities will be generated both by a growing local population and by ever increasing numbers of tourists passing through the Helena area. Adequate recreation areas should be designated, acquired and developed to meet this demand.

- The expected increase in recreation demand requires that the county assume a more active role in providing recreation facilities for its citizens, including those living in its incorporated areas. Waterfront sites and natural areas, in particular, should be considered within the areas of county responsibility and reserved for public use. Because of present legal limitations, it is recommended that the city and county reach a formal, contractual agreement and commitment to provide and share both city and county parks and open spaces.

- Helena and its jurisdictional area has a varied and colorful history which should be preserved and promoted whenever possible. Significant aesthetic and cultural phenomenon, man made and natural, should be recognized, studied and preserved for the enjoyment of our present and future generations.

Standards provide the measure for dimensioning the Plan and for evaluating the soundness of any future development proposals. These standards which suggest the location, size, distance and other physical features of the various plan elements, provide the planner with a rationale to judge proposed developments. The standards should be developed to achieve the goals set forth. The standards, as well as the development goals, should be thought of as the official policy and be formally adopted and incorporated as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Residential Standards

Areas with steep slopes, poor drainage or high water table or which are subject to flooding should be considered as marginal land unsuited for residential development.

Residential densities, or dwelling units per acre, should vary with the type of development and availability of public utilities and services. Areas beyond the service area of public water or sewer should be limited to low density development.

Residential development should be encouraged within defined neighborhoods. These should be bounded, but not penetrated, by arterials or other major thoroughfares. Within the neighborhood the street system should follow the natural contour of the ground to insure proper surface drainage and to provide homesites of lasting value.

The indiscriminent mixing of landuses should be discouraged.

Urbanization adjacent to water bodies and reserved areas must be developed in such a manner as to preserve ecological balance of the area.

School Standards

School sites should be located in relation to both existing and expected pupil population and distribution.

Elementary schools in urbanizing areas should be considered as social and cultural as well as educational centers for the neighborhood. They should serve an eventual population of 3,000 to 6,000 persons and be so located so that in a full neighborhood development no child will be required to cross heavily travelled streets or walk more than three quarters of a mile to school.

Elementary school sites in urbanizing areas should be on ground with slopes not greater than five percent in order to provide for the necessary playground and other outside activities. Sites should not be less than ten acres in size. School buildings should provide a maximum of 25 rooms, and the number of pupils per classroom should not exceed the state standard, which varies by grade from 26 to 30.

High schools should be located to serve several residential neighborhoods and should be easily accessible via major arterials or other thoroughfares. High schools should be planned for a maximum enrollement of 1,600 students and an average of 25 students per classroom.

Recreation Standards

Recreation areas intended for intensive use in the unincorporated planning area should be centrally located relative to the neighborhood they are intended to serve, preferably in conjunction with elementary schools. The standards for these urban-type recreation areas should duplicate the Helena city standards.

Community parks and such special recreation areas as water oriented sites, streamside preserves, natural areas and camp sites should be the county's major area of concern. Minimum site standards vary with each use. The overall standard for county provided facilities is twenty acres per 1,000 persons. All such areas should be conveniently located to the county's population units, be accessible via major arterials, provide parking and sanitary facilities and be adequately buffered from adjoining uses.

Commercial Standards

The amount of land allocated for commercial use should be in scale with present demand and future need. The general standard for neighborhood commercial facilities is one acre per 600 people. To this must be added the land

for highway oriented or other commercial types.

Commercial uses should be concentrated in well defined and limited areas, well buffered from adjoining uses. The indiscriminate commercial development along arterial routes is discouraged and, instead, commercial uses are encouraged to locate at strategic arterial intersections.

Neighborhood business should be encouraged to locate in planned shopping centers designed to serve a population of 3,000 to 6,000 persons. Site size should range between five and ten acres, including off-street parking, landscaping and buffering. Such centers should be located no closer than one mile and a half apart, depending on population distribution and financial feasibility.

Sites for highway oriented business, particularly on roads leading to freeway interchanges, should provide for frontage roads, adequate setbacks and buffer strips.

Industrial Standards

Large, level sites, convenient to major highways and railroads are required for industrial use. These should be located where they can be economically served by major sewer, water and electrical lines.

Planned industrial areas, or industrial parks, featuring architectural unity, common off-street parking, landscaping and open space should be encouraged where practicable.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan and Map for the jurisdictional area are based on the analysis of the land use and capability, forecast distribution of 1985 population, the existing land use, citizen input and the planning goals and standards. The plan is intended to eliminate existing problems as well as to guide future growth so that it contributes to a more livable and efficient community.

In developing this plan of the jurisdictional area, several presumptions were made. These presumptions are as follows:

- Additional water storage facilities will be provided at higher elevations in the southeastern Helena area, thereby permitting residential development between the freeway and southeastern Helena.

- New middle income housing will be constructed on readily available level land. Most of this land is in the North Valley area.

- The higher-density residential concentrations west, north and southeast of Helena will be served by sewer and water systems.

Residential Proposals

The plan proposes four different residential densities:

- Residential Estates - one half to one acre sites. Most devel-

opment of this type will be on moderately sloping land.

- Low Density - approximately four dwelling units per acre. Most residential growth will be at this density and is expected to occur at the following locations: west of the city; in the Ehler's Corner area; southeast of Helena west of Interstate 15.

- Medium Density - approximately six to eight dwelling units per acre. The plan provides for small areas along U.S. 12 west of the city and surrounding shopping areas.

- High Density - more than eight dwelling units per acre. The plan proposes an area for high density development between the freeway and new hospital. Other high density areas shown are suitable for mobile home development.

Commercial Proposals

The plan proposes two types of commercial development:

- Small neighborhood centers to provide everyday shopping needs for local residents. These might be located at Ehler's Corner and at the intersection of U.S. 12 and William Street.

- Highway-oriented commercial centers. These might be located at Ehler's Corner, at the Old Broadwater Hotel area and west of the Freeway Interchange, between California and the freeway.

Industrial Proposals

The plan proposes two types of industrial development:

- A light industrial category for selected manufacturing and bulk storage activities is designated south of the airport. This should be developed to the high standards of an industrial park.

- An area east of the proposed industrial park is considered suitable for general manufacturing and extractive industries.

Public Facility Proposals

The plan proposes the following public facilities:

- Neighborhood park and playground facilities are shown adjacent to the existing elementary schools.

- A proposed natural flood protection area is shown along Ten Mile Creek. This strip of land would link Rossiter School and the fairgrounds. A feasibility study should be made to determine what type of uses will dominate the area.

- An area for the proposed State Highway Complex is shown east of the freeway and south of U.S. 12.

Thoroughfare Proposals

Plan proposals to improve accessibility and circulation within the jurisdictional area are shown schematically. However, exact alignment and design will be based on the transportation study in progress at this time. The proposals listed below should be considered as tentative subject to the finding of the transportation study:

- Expressway. An expressway provides four moving traffic lanes, a dividing median to separate directional flows and partial access control and is included to provide for relatively unimpeded traffic flow through urban areas and between major traffic generators. The plan proposes such a facility to connect U.S. 12 west of Helena with Interstate 15 in the city to expedite east-west traffic. This is considered a long range proposal.

- Parkway. A parkway is intended to provide a scenic drive for pleasure drives and to link up two or more recreation areas. Access control is partial, and the route should be insulated from conflicting land use activities by extra-wide rights-of-way and scenic easements. The plan proposes a realignment of the parkway from that which was proposed in the city's Comprehensive Plan. The new alignment east of the CBD is shown to the south of the original proposal in relatively unsubdivided lands. This would allow for the development of subdivisions along its route which would be compatible with the roads function. The extension to the east would tie into a proposed frontage road which will parallel Interstate 15. The westward extension would continue out LeGrande Cannon Boulevard to an area where grade and land availability would allow for the straitening of the road. The connection with U.S. 12 for this new alignment would be at the present intersection.

- Community Arterials. The design of community arterials should provide for two to four moving traffic lanes on rights-of-way of at least 80 feet. Such routes are intended to provide for traffic movement within developed areas, between major arterials and collectors or local access streets. The plan proposes the following as part of this community arterial system:

  - A link between Scratchgravel-Silver Road and the northerly extension of Benton Avenue.

  - A new route to serve the proposed airport industrial park which would connect to Cedar Street on the west and U.S. 12 in the east.

  - A new route along the west side of the freeway from California and 11th Avenue which would connect to a proposed underpass at Winne.

  - A new link in FAS 280 two miles northeast of the airport to eliminate the present jog.

  - Mill Road between the freeway and Silver Road, which along with Sierra Drive would be the major east-west collector

streets in the area. Added promenance for Mill Road would be gained if an interchange is built as proposed.

Interchange Proposals

The plan proposes that an interchange to Interstate 15 be constructed in the vacinity of Mill Road. The exact location of the structure and the timing of its construction, is dependent upon numerous conditions. These conditions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Traffic volume on Montana Avenue.
- Differential of costs between building the structure and improving Montana Avenue.
- Desired routes of the driver.
- Population growth patterns in the valley.
- Safety factors.
- Availability of Federal assistance.
- Engineering factors.

ANALYSIS AREA PROPOSALS

Analysis Area 1

This is the smallest of the analysis areas and consists mostly of vacant land in the Scratchgravel Hills northwest of Helena. The soils in this area are too dry to support much vegetation, and there is only a narrow band of pasture flanking Seven Mile Creek. No population growth is anticipated in Area 1. Because of its poor accessibility, slopes and soil conditions, the plan recommends no urban development and that Area 1 remain in grazing use.

Analysis Area 2

Because of its relatively good drainage, flat terrain and accessibility, Analysis Area 2 has experienced considerable urban development. Almost half of the jurisdictional area population and half the residentail land in use is located here. Most of this residential development has been within one-half mile of Montana Avenue and has not been contiguous but scattered throughout the area. The present population of Area 2 is estimated at 1,480 persons and by 1985 it is expected to more than double with a population of 3,360 forecast for that year.

Analysis Area 2 provides examples of almost all problems usually found in the rural-urban fringe. Development is scattered with urban-type subdivisions interspersed with farms and acreage homesites. With urban-type densities and individual water and sewage disposal systems, well contamination is always a threat. There are commercial and industrial uses intermixed among residences. Despite a relatively high density of development, there are no urban services or utilities or lands being set aside

for public or recreation use. Access to the city and to other parts of the jurisdictional area is poor. Equally important, there is no focus or center of development to provide the area with identity.

The plan proposes that future urban development in the North Valley be encouraged to concentrate in two areas. These are between the dredge tailings and Ten Mile Creek and around Rossiter School. The Rossiter School area is proposed as the nucleus of a community center with a planned neighborhood shopping center and highway commercial areas designated along with surrounding medium density housing.

A neighborhood park-playground is proposed south of the existing school site. This is connected to the natural flood protection area along Ten Mile Creek. The plan also recommends that the Helena Gun Club grounds be relocated to a more isolated and safer site and this property be developed for residential use.

Most of the northern residential concentration in the North Valley is proposed for low density development in keeping with the present lot sizes. It is also recommended that the northern-most part of this analysis area be kept in agricultural use and protected from further urban encroachment by large acreage zoning requirements.

A large lot requirement for residential estates is also recommended for the southern portion of this area as well as for the residential concentration closest to Helena because of drainage and soil conditions.

Analysis Area 3

Most of Analysis Area 3 is relatively flat farmland. It is crossed by Prickly Pear and Ten Mile Creek as well as several irrigation ditches. Over 40 percent of the crop and pasture land in the jurisdictional area is here. Higher water table and poor drainage conditions have retarded urban development. The land is better suited for agricultural purposes. Current population is 270 in the area, and the forecasts assume only a slight increase by the year 1985.

What urban development there is has taken place along the southern edge of Area 3. The Helena School tracts, just north of the airport is the only residential subdivision development within this area. This area is a mixture of trailers on lots and small single family homes. Further residential development should be discouraged here because of its proximity to the airport. There is no commercial development, and industrial use is limited to gravel pits.

Because of soil and drainage conditions and the fact that the area is more valuable for agricultural use, the plan recommends no changes in Analysis Area 3. It should be retained in its present use. To facilitate access the plan recommends that FAS 280 be designated a community arterial and that the present jog two miles northeast of the airport be eliminated.

Analysis Area 4

Analysis Area 4 has over a third of the developed land in the jurisdictional area. However, the Seavern Park subdivision has the only significant group

of homes. This is a mixture of single family homes and trailers on individual lots. The present population of Analysis Area 4 is 183 persons, with the 1985 estimate 809 persons.

Analysis Area 4 is the most suitable of all the jurisdictional area for industrial and heavy commercial development. Both the Northern Pacific and Great Northern cross the area. With the airport and freeway they give Area 4 good access for industrial users.

The plan proposes that most of Analysis Area 4 be developed for industry because of its access and large, level sites. The flat area east of the freeway between the airport and U.S. 12 should be developed to industrial park standards; land further east on U.S. 12 has been classified for heavy industry. To provide better access a new arterial route is proposed connecting to Cedar Street. The plan also recommends a high density residential area suitable for mobile home park development and highway commercial in the area surrounding the U.S. 12 - Interstate 15 interchange. Further residential or commercial development in other areas should be discouraged.

Analysis Area 5

Virtually all of Analysis Area 5 is undeveloped with much of it lying within the Helena National Forest. Because of the steep slopes and soil types there is no agricultural land at all. What development there is, is limited to scattered single family homes. Most of these are strung out along the Orofino-Grizzly Gulch loop road with a concentration at Unionville. Most are on privately owned, patented mining claims which are interspersed through the federal ownership of the National Forest. Some of these private ownerships are being further subdivided for homesites, but future residential growth is not expected to be great. Present population of the area is estimated at 246 persons, while 1985 population is expected to be 330.

The plan recommends that this area be retained in its present natural state. Residential development should be concentrated at Unionville and perhaps a few other locations where it can be more easily serviced rather than being allowed to string out. The wilderness area is a prime tourist and recreation attraction and should remain unspoiled as much as possible. An overnight campground, picnic areas and similar facilities should be encouraged, however, since they would provide additional inducements for summertime tourists.

Analysis Area 6

Analysis Area 6, west of Helena, is the largest and most varied of the sub areas. It includes steep mountain slopes in the southwest and flat valley land in the northeast. The residential development in the northeast portion adjoins the city; and the street pattern, residences and commercial development are extensions of city growth patterns. This area is city-like in character except that there are more mobile homes being used for residential purposes than within the city. A residential concentration is located in the subdivision north of the old Broadwater Hotel. In addition to mixed single family and mobile homes, a number of surplus buildings from Fort Harrison have been moved into this area detracting from its stability and value.

Current population of Area 6 is estimated at 1,190 persons. By 1985 it is expected to have a population of about 2,735. The logical area for immediate residential expansion lies in further western expansion of the existing development between U.S. 12 and LeGrande Cannon Boulevard. The ground located between U.S. 12, Country Club Road and the Broadwater-Fort Harrison Road, is a difficult piece of ground to analyze due to the mixture of landuses.

The City-County Parks Plan (which has presently been adopted by the City, but not by the County) suggests that the area around the lake which was the old Helena Sand and Gravel Pits, be purchased and developed as a park. This proposal is shown on the Plan Map.

However, the existing industrial area to the south of the lake has shown recent signs of renewed development. It is reported that the brickyard, located west of the lake, will be renewing its operations in the future. The present owners of the lake and surrounding area have expressed interest in developing subdivisions on the property. Other ground within this total area has excellent properties to allow residential development, whereas other soils would be better left to their natural state or as undisturbed as possible.

The Archie Bray Foundation and the Green Meadow Country Club are two special facilities which must be considered when developing the future plans for the area.

These considerations would involve landscape buffers to provide a pleasing setting and interaction between cultural and physical developments.

This plan proposes that the map remain as shown, that is, show the total area as an undetermined landuse area except for that area immediately around the lake which will show a proposed park, which would take advantage of the water feature.

The plan also proposes that a detailed study of the entire area be undertaken in conjunction with the property owners, the City-County Planning Board, the Soil and Water Conservation Service, and the County Commissioners. The study, which should be initiated before the end of 1971, would determine the best use of the ground and ways to protect and preserve the existing landuses and also to provide for the future expansion of single or multiple uses.

Due to the undetermined future landuses within the area, the study must also include environmental regulations and controls (applicable to any type of development) in order to maintain and upgrade the physical surroundings. Also, if incompatable uses continue, they must be buffered from one another or one use must take precedent over another.

The final recommendation and findings from this proposed study should be incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan.

The plan for the remaining portion of Area 6 proposes that the trend towards city-type development be encouraged to the west of Helena. Such development can be easily serviced. To encourage this the plan provides for all four residential densities. Most of the lowest density, residential estates, is proposed for the area along the lower slopes of Mount Helena. An area for high density, suitable for mobile home park development, is proposed adjacent

to the existing mobile home park.

The plan proposes a neighborhood playground to be developed south of the Kessler School which could be used as a joint facility. Neighborhood and highway commercial areas are designated at the intersection of U.S. 12 and the proposed LeGrande Cannon Boulevard.

RECOMMENDED ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

To best implement this plan after its adoption, the following suggestions should be initiated by the County Commissioners and their respective Boards and Departments:

1. The study and adoption by the County Commissioners of a standard zoning resolution, with different zone classifications, which could be uniformily applied in areas wishing and/or in need of zoning within the jurisdictional area.

2. Institute an educational program designed to inform people about zoning.

3. Zone property within the jurisdictional area, following the plan, when requested or needed.

4. Adopt, after hearings, the County portion of the Park and Recreation Plan for Helena and the jurisdictional area and make it an element of the Comprehensive Plan.

5. Work with the city to appoint a Joint City-County Parks Board which would advise the two commissions on park and recreational development in the region.

6. Adopt after hearings, the Sewer and Water Study and its recommendations as an element of the Comprehensive Plan.

7. Work with the City to develop a regional sewer and water commission which can study and recommend ways to implement the plan.

8. Adopt subdivision regulations and enforce their provisions.

9. Study and adopt the Transportation Plan as an element of this Comprehensive Plan. Follow its suggested priorities and standards in developing roads in the jurisdictional area.

10. Work with the City in forming an Industrial Park Development Committee to help assist the landowners in the proposed area to develop a well planned industrial park. This committee could act as catalyst in the parks formation and help the landowners in working with different private and governmental agencies in obtaining finamcial and planning aid.

11. Initiate action to adopt and to enforce building codes in the jurisdictional area.

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